

# Refugee story:

## Shehzad's Family's Struggles as Refugees from Afghanistan.



“While I was away from home for work one day, some armed men barged into my house and inquired where I was. They murdered my wife in front of our two children because she did not comply with them. It all happened on April 2022. My wife was only 27 years old,” shared Shehzad.

Thirty-four-year-old Shehzad is now raising his two children, both under four years, on his own, living as a refugee in an urban city of Pakistan. He migrated to this side of the border soon after his wife was assassinated last year. Back in Afghanistan, before the regime change, Shehzad was employed with the Afghan army as a soldier. He earned AFN 20,000 (Approx. USD 222) per month which allowed the family to live a comfortable and happy life in Kundoz.

After the new government was formed, Shehzad feared for his life, especially after what happened with his wife. “I left everything behind; our home, furniture, everything. With only a Tazkira<sup>i</sup> in hand, my children and I passed the border and came to Pakistan. We spent a few weeks living under a bridge since we had no acquaintances in the new country. Two weeks later, we were sleeping in a park. My kids were getting sick and weaker. One day we were approached by a kind man in the park who offered us a place to stay at in exchange for cleaning his flat.”

Shehzad felt relieved that his children had a roof over their heads and some food, but he knew he needed to do more for them. “I was unable to find employment since I had minimal education and no paperwork. Fortunately, I was chosen as a project participant under an emergency assistance project run by Community World Service Asia and its partners<sup>ii</sup> in November 2022. Under this assistance, we have received PKR 15,000 for three months consecutively (November, December and January). I finally had the means to support my children and provide them with nutritious food and new clothes. I purchased some toys too because I felt they deserved it after all the hardship they had endured. When they saw the toys, they were thrilled. They sleep with their toys in hand now.”

<sup>i</sup> The Afghan identity card

<sup>ii</sup> ACT Alliance